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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/069,565	02/27/2002	Herve Chollet	219413US0XPCT	1849
22850	7590	12/07/2004	EXAMINER	
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314			CINTINS, IVARS C	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1724	

DATE MAILED: 12/07/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Art Unit: 1724

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 48 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. The preamble of claim 48 recites "method" but it depends from an apparatus claim (i.e. claim 35). Accordingly, it is not clear whether claim 48 is intended to be a method or an apparatus claim.

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 33, 35 and 48 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by WO 96/11056. As pointed out in the previous Office action, the reference discloses an installation comprising a column filled with chelating ion exchange resin formed from a polyazacycloalkane fixed on a support, means for passing a liquid through the column, means for introducing an acid into the resin containing column (see page 36, line 5), and means for heating the resin to 60° C (see Fig. 3); and this is all that is required by claim 33. The reference further discloses means for regenerating the resin (see page 36, line 16); and this is all that is further required by claims 35 and 48. Applicant should note that the 2 N nitric acid source of the reference is inherently capable of conditioning the resin at a pH of 4 to 6.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

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(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 34 is again rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over WO 96/11056 in view of Casolo (U.S. Patent No. 3,985,648). As pointed out in the previous Office action, WO 96/11056 discloses the claimed invention with the exception of the additional ion exchanger treatment. Casolo teaches removing metal cations from a liquid with a chelating resin (see col. 4, lines 57-60), and further discloses subjecting this liquid to additional ion exchanger treatment prior to the chelating resin treatment (see Fig. 1). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide the system of WO 96/11056 with the additional ion exchanger treatment of Casolo, in order to further purify the liquid undergoing treatment in this primary reference system.

Applicant's arguments filed September 24, 2004, and supplemented November 1, 2004, have been noted and carefully considered but are not deemed to be persuasive of patentability. Applicant argues that WO 96/11056 does not anticipate claim 33 because this reference does not disclose the recited means for conditioning the resin at a pH of 4-6, nor does it disclose the recited means for heating the resin to a temperature of at least 60° C. It is pointed out, however, that WO 96/11056 discloses a source of 2 N nitric acid and means for introducing this acid into the resin containing column; and this acid is inherently capable of conditioning the resin at a pH of 4 to 6, which capability is all that is required by apparatus claims 33, 35 and 48. The fact that this reference may not contemplate conditioning the resin in this manner is not deemed to be persuasive, since it is well settled that a recitation with respect to the manner in which a claimed apparatus is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from a prior art

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apparatus satisfying the claimed structural limitations. *Ex parte Masham*, 2 USPQ2d 1647 (1987). As for the heating means, it is pointed out that WO 96/11056 clearly discloses means for heating the resin to at least 60° C (see Fig. 3); and this is all that is required by claim 33, 35 and 48.

Claims 1-32, 36-47 and 49 are allowed.

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to I. Cintins whose telephone number is (571) 272-1155. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mr. Duane Smith, can be reached at (571) 272-1166.

The centralized facsimile number for the USPTO is (703) 872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Ivars C. Cintins
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1724

I. Cintins
December 4, 2004